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E.O. 12958: DECL: 2/15/2017
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [WI](#)
SUBJECT: FRENCH PUSH MOROCCANS TO ENSURE CREDIBLE AUTONOMY
PLAN

REF: STATE 20297

Classified By: Political Minister-Counselor Josiah Rosenblatt, reasons
1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (C) On February 20, Poloff delivered reftel demarche separately to Christian Testo, MFA DAS-equivalent for the Maghreb, and Francois Touazi, FM Douste-Blazy's cabinet advisor for North Africa. Both said the GoF would continue to stress to the Moroccans the importance of producing a credible autonomy plan. Touazi noted that Douste-Blazy dispatched Sylvie Berman (IO A/S-equivalent) to Rabat on Feb. 17-18, where she advised the Moroccans on developing a strategy to sell their plan at the UN. Touazi added that the Moroccans have recently had contacts with the Polisario, although he was uncertain at which level. He said France would continue to encourage the Moroccans to engage in direct talks with the Polisario rather than to insist on Polisario-CORCAS negotiations, observing that "the Moroccans need to understand that the regional context has changed."

12. (C) Both Quai officials asked about U.S. plans for engaging Algeria on the autonomy proposal, noting that the difficult relations between President Bouteflika and King Mohamed VI did not augur well for a shift in the Algerian position.

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